

How-To-Essay

HOW TO DEAL WITH YOUR FEELINGS

My host mom passed this recipe on to me during the first week of my exchange year here in Chaska. Never would I have expected to get something that special just like that. Pam probably doesn't even know how special it is to me. When she taught me the recipe it felt like something old and precious was being passed on to me. Like a necklace that gets passed on from mom to daughter to daughter to daughter... I knew from the first moment it was going to be very precious to me, although I didn't know how precious. It is something very intimate of the family, so I felt very honored that it was passed on to me. It made me feel like a part of the family immediately.

Making chocolate chip cookies is a very easy way to deal with your emotions. It doesn't take many ingredients. You need butter, white and brown sugar, eggs, vanilla, flour, salt, baking soda and, of course, chocolate chips. You can buy all these things in the grocery store around the corner. In order to make the best cookies, though, you need all your feelings and emotions that you are dealing with at the moment: joy, sadness, anger, depression, happiness and more. If you don't add those ingredients your cookies are going to taste plain and boring. In the very beginning preheat your oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Also gather all your feelings together and "heat them up." Now, you should be all ready to go.

First, you cream one cup of butter (or shortening, that gives you an even better result) with three quarters of a cup of both white and brown sugar. Then you add all your calm emotions. I put in my sadness and depression but also patience and a little bit of happiness. You cream all this together until it's well blended and you can't distinguish the ingredients anymore. Afterwards, you shouldn't see any chunks of sugar in the mixture. The feelings you put in at the beginning should be all packed up in the cream. Not much of them are left inside of you.

Then you add the two eggs and one teaspoon of vanilla. With this go all your very emotional feelings—it doesn't matter if they're high or low. While you're beating the eggs and vanilla into the cream, you put all your anger and everything you're mad about in it. Some happiness would help, too. You use all your force to make the whole thing very creamy and well blended. You stir and stir and stir until you don't have feelings in your arm anymore. When you're done with this part, you should have forgotten what you were angry and mad about. All these feelings went into the cookies. The mixture is now really creamy and looks very calm—just like you should feel. You should also be worn out by now.

Next, you stir in two and one half cups of flour, one teaspoon of salt and one teaspoon of baking soda. Before you put the three ingredients into the cream, you mix them up a little bit. Now, you can stir them in very slowly together with all the rest of your feelings. You just leave out your happiness; you need to save it for the last part. You just stir around and around until it's all mixed in. By now, you should have dealt with your anger, depression, sadness, and joy. Of course, other feelings of yours might have been involved.

Last comes one half cup of chocolate chips. This is the best part. It involves all your happiness and joyful feelings. You stir it all up until the chocolate is all over the dough. However, if you feel like you want more chocolate in your cookies, just add more until you're satisfied.

When you're all done preparing the dough, you'll need a couple of people to do quality control. Two people taste just a little bit of the dough and tell you what they think. If you followed all the instructions and put all your heart into it, you shouldn't hear anything negative.

Now you put small amounts of the dough (about the size of a teaspoon) on a baking sheet. You should be able to fit about 12 on each sheet. Be sure not to put them too close together, for they expand while they're baking. You put the cookies in the oven for ten to twelve minutes at 375 degrees. You should have preheated the oven in the beginning. Check on the cookies every once in a while; they are ready to come out when they're just starting to turn gold brown on the edges. Let them cool on a paper towel until you're ready to enjoy.

While the cookies are in the oven, you should take some time to clean everything up. Think a little bit about yourself—you should be happy and calm. By the time you're done you should feel cleaned up, yourself. You put all your feelings in those cookies!

This recipe works best when you're really angry. One of my friends had a big fight with her parents once. She was really mad and didn't know what to do. I had her come over to make cookies. We made two batches of cookies—hers were way better than mine just because she had so much more emotion to put in there.

When my host mom told me all this I thought it was ridiculous at first. I didn't believe her. It seemed weird. Then, when I made my first batch of cookies I found out that it is really relieving. This recipe is very special to me—whenever I am angry I make a couple of cookies and I am fine afterwards. It doesn't take much at all and gives you back a lot. I hope it becomes special to you, as well.